

SOME GOLDEN DAYBREAK

17 Sermons on the Second Coming of CHRIST

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CHAPTER SIX

THE MARK OF THE BEAST, OR, THE WORK OF THE UNHOLY TRINITY

REVELATION 13

"And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority. And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast. And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him? And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. If any man have an ear, let him hear. He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.

And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the

beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six." (1-18)

It is exceedingly easy to make a lot of guesses and speculations on matters of prophecy. Many have done so and have likewise brought into disrepute the teaching of the second coming and related events. Therefore, we will continue to follow carefully the WORD of GOD.

In the last message we discussed briefly the coming Antichrist, his characteristics, and his work. We noted that John said, **"Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time"** (I John 2:18).

There are many antichrists in the world today. All movements and men against our Saviour are antichrists. But let us notice that there is coming an Antichrist. The Antichrist will be a person. He will be a man just as CHRIST was a man. When the WORD of GOD speaks of the Antichrist, the masculine pronoun "he" is used.

When will this Antichrist appear? He will appear when the church has been raptured and the HOLY SPIRIT has been taken away.

"For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the LORD shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming" (II Thessalonians 2:7, 8).

After the Christians have been raptured and the SPIRIT taken, the tribulation will begin upon the earth. The tribulation is that period of time when judgments are sent by GOD upon a Christ-rejecting world. The terrible plagues which will come upon the earth are described in Revelation 6 to 18. In the forefront during the tribulation time there will be three unholy persons. All three of them are mentioned in Revelation 13.

I. THE DRAGON

"And the dragon gave him his power . . . And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast" (vss. 2, 4).

This dragon is none other than old Satan. He is the enemy of our CHRIST. All of sin and sorrow we see today is because of him. All that will come upon the earth will be because of him. In the tribulation Satan will make his last stand and will endeavor to get control of the earth. He will choose a man to be his representative. He will give to this person great power. We know him as the Antichrist.

- The Devil is GOD's enemy.
- The Devil is every Christian's enemy.
- The Devil is the enemy of all righteousness.
- The Devil is the author of sin, suffering, and death.

Though Satan has great power, Christians can defeat him today. James says, **"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you"** (James 4:7). CHRIST showed us the way when He resisted the temptation of Satan in the wilderness. He won by the sword of the SPIRIT. We must battle and win in the same way.

The end of Satan is plainly given in the Holy Scriptures. First, we find that he will be bound during the kingdom age. This is given in Revelation 20:1-3:

"And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season."

The eternal doom of Satan is in Revelation 20:10, **"And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever."**

The Devil does not reign in Hell as a king. He will be tormented in Hell just as the others who reject the Saviour.

II. THE BEAST

"And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy" (Revelation 13:1).

This is the one to whom the Devil gives power and authority. This beast is the Antichrist.

Note the origin of the beast. He will rise up out of the sea. The sea is typical of the Gentile nations. The particular sea in mind is doubtless the Mediterranean for it is the center, so to speak, of the former Roman Empire. The ten horns are a further mark of identification, showing that the Roman Empire is referred to, not as it has been during its entire existence, but as it shall be known in its last form. The seven heads doubtless symbolize the different forms of government in which the Roman Empire has existed from its beginning to the end.

Revelation 13:3 speaks of the restoration of the Roman Empire when it will be a federated empire of ten kingdoms, ruled over by the beast. This beast will be a warlike person, for the world will say, **"Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?"** He will be a blasphemer. **"And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven."** The Antichrist will be an atheist. He will set himself above all that is called GOD and will cause the people to worship him.

The beast as set before us in Revelation 13 is the dragon's masterpiece of delusion. Satan has always wanted people to worship him, and now through the work of the beast they do so, for verse 4 says, **"And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast."**

III. THE FALSE PROPHET

This is the third member of the unholy trinity (Satan, the beast, the false prophet).

The false prophet will be a man, just as the beast. This is proven by the doom of the false prophet as given in Revelation 19:20. False systems or empires are dealt with by GOD on earth, but persons are cast into the lake of fire.

The first beast came out of the sea. This second beast or false prophet comes up out of the earth. If the sea symbolizes the Gentile nations, the earth possibly symbolizes Israel. This false prophet, as he is called, may be a Jew, while the beast before whom he exercises his power may be a Gentile.

The first beast will be a dictator and a world ruler. This second beast will be something of a religious leader and will perform wonders and cause the people to worship the beast. The main business of the false prophet is to support the beast. He will be the absolute tool of the first beast.

Seven verses give a summary of his work. Consider Revelation 13:12-15:

"And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men. And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed."

Let us list the work of this evil one:

1. He will exercise the power of the Antichrist, and cause the world to worship the first beast.
2. He will perform great wonders and bring down fire from Heaven in the sight of men.
3. He will deceive earth-dwellers by means of his miracles.
4. He will cause the people to make an image of the beast. He will give life to the image and destroy all who will not worship the image of the beast.

And now, may we consider the closing three verses of Revelation 13.

"And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred three score and six."

In the tribulation days it will be either worship the beast or starve. All men, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, will be forced to receive a mark in their right hands or in their

foreheads. No one will be able to buy or sell without this mark. Those who would eat must bear the mark or the name or the number of the beast. **"Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six."**

Many people have tried to figure out the meaning of this number, 666. The outstanding Bible teachers simply say that six is the number of man. It represents imperfection, for seven is GOD's number of perfection.

Dr. William R. Newell says that GOD will give full understanding to His saints in the tribulation when it is needed. The saints of the church age will not be there, but there will be tribulation saints who 'worship not the beast and receive not the mark.' They will know and understand this man. His number will be plain to them, for it is the number of a man.

Many people have tried to arrive at this mysterious number. It has been pointed out that the word Latin as spelled with Greek letters, lateinos, makes six hundred sixty-six in their numerical value. Others have called attention to the same fact concerning Nero Caesar spelled in Hebrew (the numerical value comes to six hundred sixty-six).

But putting aside vain guesses, we know that six is the utmost reach of man. Man was created on the sixth day. God's great human opponents have been marked by the number six. Goliath was six cubits in height. His spear's head weighed six shekels, and he had six pieces of armor. Nebuchadnezzar's image was sixty cubits high and six broad. These are but a few of the sixes which attach themselves to men.

In connection with this number of the beast someone has said that it is interesting that the radio broadcasting wave length of Rome, Itale, is 666.

In the light of the tragic days ahead, there are two things we should do. First, we should rejoice in our own salvation and in the fact that we will escape the terrible things which are coming upon the earth. Second, we should endeavor with all our power to bring people to CHRIST so that they will be saved and escape the awful tribulation. This is the time to win people before the darkness settles upon the earth. We have darkness now, but not as it will be in that awful coming day.

~ end of chapter 6 ~
